

Message Text

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TO USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 153639

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO ANKARA KABUL
ISLAMABAD FROM TEHRAN JUN 26

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 6124

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, IR

SUBJ: NARCOTICS MATTERS RELATED TO IRAN

REF: STATE A-2458

1. THE FOLLOWING IS AN INITIAL REPLY TO THE INTELLIGENCE
GUIDANCE SENT TO NEA POSTS IN APRIL 1975 (REF AIRGRAM). THE
NUMBERING OF THE RESPONSES GIVEN BELOW ACCORDS WITH THE NUMBER-
ING OF THE TOPICS IN THAT AIRGRAM, AND FOR THE SAKE OF BREVITY
THE MATERIAL AND QUESTIONS IN THE REF AIRGRAM ARE NOT REPEATED
HERE.

2. TOPICS OF INTEREST:

A. GENERALLY SPEAKING, THE ANTI-NARCOTICS PROGRAMS OF THE
GOI ARE OF UNEVEN EFFECTIVENESS. AS WILL BE BROUGHT OUT IN
LATER SECTIONS OF THIS REPORT, CONTROL OF THE LICIT PRODUCTION
AND DISTRIBUTION OF OPIUM IS ACCOMPLISHED WITH VERY LITTLE KNOWN
DIVERSION TO ILLICIT USES. ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAWS AGAINST
TRAFFICKING IN NARCOTICS IS, HOWEVER, LESS EFFECTIVE. THE
GENDARMERIE HAS NO CENTRALLY-ORGANIZED ANTI-NAROCTICS PROGRAM,
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AND THE NATIONAL POLICE NARCOTICS BUREAU IS TOO SMALL TO STEM
SIGNIFICANTLY TRAFFICKING IN THE CITIES. IRANIAN CUSTOMS IS
MORE INTERESTED IN ASSESSING AND COLLECTING DUTIES ON GOODS
THAN IT IS IN INTERCEPTING ILLEGAL SHIPMENTS AT THE BORDERS.

ALSO, THERE IS CONSIDERABLE BUREAUCRATIC CONFLICT BETWEEN THESE AGENCIES, FOR ALL HAVE REWARDS SYSTEMS WHICH INEVITABLE DISCOURAGE INTERDEPARTMENTAL COOPERATION. TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION OF DRUG ADDICTS IS INSUFFICIENT. EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC AGAINST THE DANGERS OF DRUG ABUSE IS PRACTICALLY NON-EXISTANT, AS IS RESEARCH IN SUPPORT OF THE SEVERAL ASPECTS OF DRUG CONTROL.

B. ALTHOUGH THE GOI USUALLY SUPPORTS US INITIATIVES AND VIEWS WITH REGARD TO DRUG TRAFFICKING IN INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS AND EAGERLY ACCEPTS AMERICAN ANTI-NARCOTIC TRAINING OFFERS, THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE OF A WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE IN ACTUAL OPERATIONS AGAINST TRAFFICKERS, FINANCIERS, ETC. THE IRANIAN NATIONAL POLICE ACCEPT NARCOTICS INTELLIGENCE FROM DEA BUT PROVIDE LITTLE INFORMATION IN RETURN. IRANIAN AUTHORITIES COOPERATE WITH INTERPOL BUT NOT VERY EFFECTIVELY, AND THERE IS NO COOPERATION WITH THE TURKS, AFGHANS, OR PAKISTANIS ACROSS THEIR COMMON BORDERS WITH IRAN. WEST GERMAN POLICE OFFICERS WHO VISITED TEHRAN LAST YEAR TO FOLLOWUP ON LEADS IN THE HASHISH TRADE RECEIVED LITTLE USEFUL INFORMATION OR COOPERATION. FURTHERMORE, THE GOI HAS JUST DECLINED TO EXTEND THE CONTRACT OF A UNITED NATIONS ADVISER ON NARCOTICS CONTROL TO THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH. THESE ACTIONS, OR LACK THEREOF, WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT THE GOI FEELS NO GREAT SENSE OF URGENCY WITH REGARD TO INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL.

C. THE US MISSION HAS VERY LITTLE HARD INFORMATION ON THIS SCORE. SOME HASHISH TRAFFICKERS ARE KNOWN, AND IT IS FAIRLY WELL ESTABLISHED THAT MOST OF THE HASHISH TRAFFIC FROM IRAN TO EUROPE IS TRANSPORTED IN TIR TRUCKS, MOSTLY IN 500-1,000 KILO LOTS. THERE IS PRACTICALLY NO INTELLIGENCE ON TRAFFICKERS IN HARD DRUGS, BUT IT IS THOUGHT THAT THOSE FINANCIERS ARE IN TEHRAN.

D. THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT ILLEGAL CULTIVATION OF OPIUM IN IRAN, WHEREAS INDIVIDUAL CANNABIS PLANTS ARE UBIQUITOUS AROUND IRANIAN VILLAGES. PRODUCTION OF LEGAL OPIUM FOR THE CONFIDENTIAL

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ADDICT MAINTENANCE PROGRAM IS CONTROLLED BY THE MINISTRY OF COOPERATIVES AND RURAL AFFAIRS. SINCE IT IS A HIGHLY SUBSIDIZED CROP AND ATTRACTIVE FOR THE FARMER, LICENSES TO GROW OPIUM ARE DIVIDED WIDELY AMONG THE PROVINCES OF IRAN. (LICENSED IRANIAN FARMERS RECEIVE ABOUT DOLLARS 120/KILO, DEPENDING UPON QUALITY, FOR GUM OPIUM VS. DOLLARS 75-110/KILO THEY WOULD GET IF THEY SOLD IT ILLEGALLY.) IT IS HARVESTED UNDER GUARD AND BOILED DOWN TO GUM NEAR THE GROWING SITE BEFORE BEING SHIPPED TO SOUTH TEHRAN FOR FABRICATION (SUN DRYING INTO STICK OPIUM) AND STORAGE. THE NARCOTICS CONTROL ADMINISTRATION, MINISTRY OF HEALTH, SEES TO THE DISTRIBUTION OF LEGALLY-PRODUCED OPIUM TO AUTHORIZED PHARMACIES AND AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES. THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE THAT SIGNIFICANT QUANTITIES OF OPIUM ARE

DIVERTED TO THE ILLEGAL TRAFFIC AT THE GROWING, INITIAL PROCESSING, SHIPPING, FABRICATION, STORAGE, OR DISTRIBUTION STAGES. HOWEVER, SOME REGISTERED ADDICTS SELL THEIR RATION AT BLACK MARKET PRICES, AND IN THIS WAY SOME LEGALLY-PRODUCED STICK OPIUM ENTERS INTO THE ILLICIT TRADE, A FRACTION OF IT BEING ULTIMATELY SEIZED FROM TRAFFICKERS. WITH REGARD TO ILLICIT OPIUM, THE SOURCES ARE IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN OR IN TURKEY. HEROIN LABS APPEAR TO BE EITHER IN AZERBAIJAN CLOSE TO THE TURKISH BORDER OR IN TEHRAN, SINCE THESE ARE WHERE PAST SEIZURES HAVE BEEN CONCENTRATED.

E. (1) HASHISH IS SMUGGLED INTO IRAN FROM AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN, PRIMARILY BY BALUCHI TRIBESMEN UTILIZING EVERY MEANS OF TRANSPORT FROM BACKPACKING TO FAST, LONG-RANGE VEHICLES IN CONVOYS WITH HEAVILY ARMED ESCORTS. AVAILABLE DATA, PRIMARILY FROM SEIZURES, INDICATES THAT THE HASHISH IS BROUGHT TO THE VICINITY OF TEHRAN AND SMUGGLED TO EUROPE ABOARD TIR TRUCKS.

(2) OPIUM IS SMUGGLED INTO IRAN FROM THE SAME SOURCES, BY THE SAME PEOPLE, USING THE SAME METHODS AS FOR HASHISH. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE, THOUGH, THAT IT LEAVES IRAN.

GKEL MORPHINE BASE WAS FORMERLY SMUGGLED INTO IRAN FROM TURKEY, BUT SEIZURES FROM THE PAST TWO YEARS WOULD INDICATE THAT THIS SOURCE IS DRYING UP, IF NOT ALREADY STOPPED. LAB OPERATORS MAY NOW BE LOOKING TO THE EAST FOR THEIR SUPPLY, FOR MORPHINE BASE IS NOT KNOWN TO BE PRODUCED WITHIN IRAN.

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(4) MOST IRANIAN HEROIN IS UNDOUBTEDLY CONSUMED IN IRAN BY AN ESTIMATED 50,000 ADDICTS. TO DATE THERE ARE NO HARD FACTS TO PROVE THAT THE METHODS USED TO SMUGGLE HASHISH TO EUROPE ARE ALSO BEING USED FOR HEROIN, BUT THE POTENTIAL IS THERE. RELATIVELY SMALL AMOUNTS OF HEROIN HAVE BEEN SEIZED IN EUROPE FROM IRANIAN NATIONALS.

F. THERE IS NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF LICIT OPIUM REACHES THE ILLICIT MARKET UP TO THE POINT THAT IT IS DELIVERED TO PHARMACIES FOR SALE TO REGISTERED ADDICTS. HOWEVER, REGISTERED ADDICTS MAY NOT NEED THEIR ENTIRE RATION AND CAN SELL A PORTION OF IT TO UNREGISTERED USERS OR THEY MAY SELL ALL OF IT ON THE BLACK MARKET IN ORDER TO BUY BLACK AFGHAN OPIUM, WHICH SOME ARE SAID TO PREFER IN THE BELIEF THAT IT IS STRONGER. ALSO, THE RESIDUE FROM SMOKED OPIUM IS FREQUENTLY MIXED INTO A MORE POTENT PRODUCT KNOWN AS SHIREH AND SMOKED AGAIN OR SOLD. THIS ONCE THE LICIT OPIUM LEAVES THE AUTHORIZED GOVERNMENT CHANNELS THERE ARE NUMEROUS WAYS IT CAN MOVE INTO THE ILLICIT MARKET IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER.

G. AREAS AUTHORIZED FOR PRODUCTION OF LEGAL OPIUM ARE WIDELY SCATTERED AMONG THE PROVINCES OF IRAN AND CHANGE FROM YEAR TO

YEAR DEPENDING UPON ESTIMATED NEED FOR THE CROP. INFORMATION ON PRECISE LOCATIONS IS NOT PUBLISHED. LATEST INFORMATION AVAILABLE INDICATES THAT 23,586 KILOGRAMS OF GUM OPIUM WERE PRODUCED DURING 1973. ITS PALUE WOULD BE APPROXIMATELY DOLS 2,359,000 (AT DOLS100/KILOGRAM).

H. THE LICIT CROP IS STORED AND PROCESSED IN SOUTH TEHRAN. IT IS NOT EXPORTED.

I. THE GOI'S CONTROL SYSTEM WITH REGARD TO LICIT OPIUM HAS BEEN DESCRIBED UNDER D. IT WORKS FAIRLY WELL IN KEEPING LICIT OPIUM OUT OF THE ILLICIT MARKET. IT HAS BEEN A FIASCO FROM THE STANDPOINT OF REDUCING IRAN'S ADDICT POPULATION. THE EXPLANATION LIES PARTLY IN LAXITY IN THE REGISTRY OF ADDICTS AND PARTLY IN A COMPLEX OF SOCIAL FACTORS. OPIUM SMOKING HAS BEEN WIDELY PREVALENT IN IRAN FOR MANY YEARS, AND THE ATTITUDE OF MOST IRANIANS TOWARD IT IS ONE OF TOLERANCE. (IN SOME EDUCATED, HIGH-SOCIETY CIRCLES IT IS SMOKED SOCIALLY AFTER DINNER.) IT IS LIKELY THAT A FEW INFLUENTIAL IRANIANS ARE INVOLVED
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IN THE ILLICIT OPIUM TRADE, FOR THERE ARE LARGE PROFITS TO BE MADE FROM IT. IT APPEARS THAT THESE PERSONS ARE ABLE TO SECURE PROTECTION FOR THEIR HENCHMEN BECAUSE THE AUTHORITIES DO NOT PRESS POTENTIALLY IMPORTANT INVESTIGATIONS AS HARD AS ONE WOULD EXPECT. FINALLY, FAILURE TO EXCHANGE NARCOTICS INTELLIGENCE WITH FOREIGN OFFICIALS MAY REFLECT SOME XENOPHOBIA AND SOME SENSITIVITY TO THE POSSIBILITY OF CRITICISM.

J. THERE IS LITTLE GOOD INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT. ABOUT ALL THAT CAN BE SAID WITH AUTHORITY IS THAT, CONCERNING HASHISH, TEHRAN SEEMS TO BE THE TRANSIT AND TRANSSHIPMENT CENTER ALONG THE ROUTE FROM AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN TO EUROPE. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT EITHER HASHISH OIL OR MORPHINE BASE IS PRODUCED IN IRAN. HEROIN LABS SEIZED RECENTLY HAVE BEEN CONCENTRATED EITHER IN AZARBAIJAN OR IN TEHRAN, AND ONLY ABOUT ONE KILO OF HEROIN HAS USUALLY BEEN FOUND AT THE TIME OF SEIZURE. THE OPERATORS HAVE USUALLY BEEN IRANIANS FROM AZERBAIJAN.

K. EIGHTY PERCENT OF THE HEROIN PRODUCED IN IRAN IS OF SMOKING QUALITY AND ONLY 20 PERCENT IS INJECTABLE. IT IS USUALLY DISTRIBUTED IN SMALL PAPER PACKETS.

L. SUPPLIES OF ACETIC ANHYDRIDE, THE MOST CRITICAL CHEMICAL IN HEROIN PRODUCTION, ARE EITHER SMUGGLED IN FROM AFGHANISTAN OR WEST GERMANY OR ARE DIVERTEJ FROM LEGAL IMPORTS. ACETIC ANHYDRIDE SELLS FOR DOLS10/LITER ON THE BLACK MARKET.

M. AS MENTIONED TWICE ABOVE, PAST SEIZURES INDICATE CONCENTRATIONS OF HEROIN LABS IN AZERBAIJAN AND TEHRAN. PROBABLY ONLY TWENTY-FIVE PEOPLE, AT MOST, ARE INVOLVED.

N. IT IS DOUBTED THAT THE SUBJECT HAS ANY SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS. IT APPEARS EVIDENT, HOWEVER, THAT THE CURRENT NATIONAL ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORT IS A LOGICAL AND NECESSARY PART OF THE NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS. BOTH SKILLED AND UNSKILLED MANPOWER IS DESPERATELY NEEDED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT EXPLOSION NOW TAKING PLACE IN IRAN, AND THE COUNTRY CAN ILL AFFORD THE BURDEN OF SUBSIDIZED OPIUM PRODUCTION AND THE LOSS OF MANHOURS DUE TO OPIUM ADDICTION, NOT TO MENTION THE SCARCE FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL DIVERTED TO TREAT AND REHABILITATE ADDICTS.
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O. WITH A FEW NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS, OFFICIALS OF THE GOI AND IRANIAN POLITICIANS ARE NOT STRONGLY COMMITTED TO THE NATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL EFFORT. THE LEVEL OF DRUG ABUSE (500,000-600,000 DRUG ADDICTS IN A TOTAL POPULATION OF ABOUT 33 MILLION PEOPLE) THOUGH HIGH BY ANY STANDARDS, IS NOT REALLY PERCEIVED AS A SERIOUS PROBLEM REQUIRING CONCERTED, CONTINUING ATTENTION BY THE GOI. CONTROL OF TERRORIST AND SUBVERSIVE GROUPS HAS MUCH HIGHER PRIORITY. THE LAST PART OF THE QUESTION DOES NOT APPLY TO IRAN, SINCE FARMERS ARE SUBSIDIZED BY THE GOI TO PRODUCE OPIUM.

P. IT CAN REASONABLY BE EXPECTED THAT SOME OFFICIAL AND INFLUENTIAL PERSONS HAVE A VESTED INTEREST IN THE NARCOTICS STATUS QUO WITHIN IRAN, BUT THE EMBASSY HAS NO FACTS TO SUBSTANTIATE THIS. IT IS DOUBTED THAT INTERNAL POLITICS PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN NARCOTICS TRANSACTIONS OR VICEVERSA.

Q. DRUG ABUSE IS A MAJOR NATIONAL PROBLEM, FOR THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED 500,000-600,000 THOUSAND OPIUM USERS AND PERHAPS AS MANY AS 50,000 HEROIN ADDICTS. THE EMBASSY CANNOT IDENTIFY ANY SPECIFIC GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL WHO USES NARCOTICS. THERE ARE SOME MILITARY USERS BUT THEIR NUMBER IS NOT KNOWN. THE PUBLIC APPEARS TO BE GENERALLY APATHETIC CONCERNING NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTROL EFFORTS.

R. FOR SEVERAL YEARS THE GOI HAS SPONSORED A PROGRAM TO REHABILITATE ADDICTS. THEIR BEST-KNOWN FACILITY HAS BEEN THE VANAK HOSPITAL (120 BEDS) IN TEHRAN BUT THERE ARE SOME SMALL FACILITIES OR PARTS OF HOSPITALS ELSEWHERE IN IRAN WHERE DETOXIFICATION OF ADDICTS IS ALSO CARRIED OUT. UNFORTUNATELY, THESE FACILITIES HAVE NOT HAD REAL REHABILITATION PROGRAMS TO REINTEGRATE FORMER ADDICTS INTO SOCIETY, WITH THE RESULT THAT A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF THOSE TREATED REAPPEAR FOR DETOXIFICATION TIME AFTER TIME. CONSEQUENTLY, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO GIVE A FIGURE ON THE PROPORTION OF ADDICTS WHO RECEIVE TREATMENT. WITHIN THE PAST YEAR THE NEW MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE HAS LAUNCHED A MAJOR NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR ADDICT TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION. A 400-BED HOSPITAL IN THE YAFTABAD AREA OF TEHRAN IS BEING FITTED OUT AS THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR THIS PROGRAM, AND SEVERAL PROVINCIAL CITIES WILL HAVE MAJOR FACILI-

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TIES LATER. THESE WILL NOT ONLY BE EQUIPPED TO DETOXYIFY THEIR PATIENTS BUT WILL HAVE FACILITIES FOR TRAINING THEM IN SUCH TRADES AS BUILDING, CARPENTRY, AND AUTO MAINTENANCE. THE MAJOR PROBLEM WILL NOT BE PHYSICAL FACILITIES BUT STAFFING, FOR IRAN DOES NOT HAVE THE DOCTORS, NURSES, PSYCHOLOGISTS, SOCIAL WORKERS AND TRADES TEACHERS TO MAN THE PROJECTED REHABILITATION CENTERS. ANOTHER PROBLEM IS THAT ONCE AN ADDICT VOLUNTEERS FOR TREATMENT THERE IS NO LEGAL SANCTION TO MAKE HIM COMPLETE IT. THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH HAS RECENTLY INITIATED A VERY MODEST PROGRAM OF EDUCATION TEACHERS AND REGIONAL OFFICIALS ON THE DANGERS OF DRUG ABUSE, BUT THE HIGH VISIBILITY, MULTI-MEDIA PUBLIC CAMPAIGN ANNOUNCED LAST SUMMER PETERED OUT IN A MATTER OF WEEKS.

S. SEIZURES BY THE GENDARMERIE PROVIDE EVIDENCE THAT BALUCHI TRIBESMEN IN THE SOUTHEAST OF IRAN SMUGGLE WEAPONS ACROSS BORDERS AS WELL AS NARCOTICS AND CONSUMER GOODS. THE POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT SOME OF THE REVENUE GENERATED FROM THEIR SMUGGLING ACTIVITIES IS BEING USED TO FINANCE REVOLUTIONARY AIMS IN THE BALUCHI-INHABITED TERRITORIES OF IRAN, AFGHANISTAN, AND PAKISTAN. WEAPONS AND CONSUMER GOODS ARE BROUGHT INTO IRAN THROUGH THE PERSIAN GULF AND ARE CARRIED ON EASTWARD, WHEREAS NARCOTICS ARE SMUGGLED WESTWARD. QUITE APART FROM THIS, A RECENT SEIZURE OF 1,050 KILOS OF HASHISH IN TEHRAN IS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN INTENDED FOR THE EUROPEAN MARKET AND WAS TO HAVE FINANCED ANTI-GOVERNMENT TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. THIS IS THE ONLY KNOWN INSTANCE OF SUCH A CONNECTION.

T. ANSWERED IN "S".

U. THESE QUESTIONS DO NOT APPLY TO IRAN, SINCE IT DOES NOT NOW EXPORT OPIUM AND HAS NO NEED TO ENTER THE FOREIGN OPIUM MARKET.

3. E. IRAN.

(1) STATISTICS ON THE TOTAL ADDICT POPULATION OF IRAN ARE LACKING, BUT INFORMED ESTIMATES PLACE THE NUMBER OF OPIUM ADDICTS AT BETWEEN 500,000 AND 600,000 WITH APPROXIMATELY 50,000 ADDITIONAL PERSONS ADDICTED TO HEROIN. OF THESE, SOME 169,000
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WERE REGISTERED ADDICTS AS OF MAY 1975. THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED ADDICTS HAS GROWN SIGNIFICANTLY IN RECENT YEARS, FOR IT WAS 118,000 IN DECEMBER, 1972, AND 148,376 IN DECEMBER, 1973. THE REASON FOR THIS RISE IS NOT KNOWN, NOR IS IT KNOWN WHETHER THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ADDICTS HAS RISEN PROPORTIONATELY IN THE

SAME PERIOD--PROBABLY NOT. HOWEVER, THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT MANY MORE PERSONS UNDER AGE 60 HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN OPIUM RATION CARDS THAN SHOULD HAVE, INDICATING THAT THE TOTAL ADDICT POPULATION IS PROBABLY INCREASING SOMEWHAT RATHER THAN DECREASING AS THE REGISTRATION PROGRAM WAS SUPPOSED TO BRING ABOUT.

(2) THE IMPERIAL IRANIAN GENDARMERIE, WHICH IS PRINCIPALLY RESPONSIBLE IN THE AREA OF BALUCHISTAN, HAS NOT MADE ANY MAJOR SHIFTS IN ITS RESOURCES TO SUPPRESS THE BALUCHI SMUGGLERS. SUGGESTIONS HAVE BEEN MADE TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF POSTS IN THIS DISTRICT, BUT NO ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN AS YET TO DO SO. PLANS ARE UNDERWAY TO FURNISH THIS DISTRICT AND NEIGHBORING DISTRICTS WITH INCREASED AMOUNTS OF MORE MODERN EQUIPMENT SUCH AS VEHICLES AND RADIOS.

(3) THE NUMBER OF LABORATORIES REPORTED IS MERELY A ROUGH GUESS BY THE NATIONAL POLICE BASED UPON AN ESTIMATED HEROIN ADDICT POPULATION OF 50,000. THE IRANIAN HEROIN LABORATORIES ARE QUITE UNSOPHISTICATED OPERATIONS AND ARE EASILY REPLACED OR MOVED.

(4) SEIZURES OF MORPHINE BASE HAVE DECREASED TO ZERO IN THE LAST YEAR, WHICH PROBABLY INDICATES A SIZABLE DECREASE IN THE VOLUME BEING BROUGHT ACROSS THE BORDER FROM TURKEY. ALTHOUGH SEIZURES ARE A NOTORIOUSLY INACCURATE MEANS OF JUDGING THE VOLUME OF TRAFFIC, ANOTHER INDICATION THAT THE TRAFFIC IN MORPHINE BASE HAS TAPERED OFF IS A DOUBLING IN ITS PRICE IN THE LAST YEAR.

(5) THE FIRST QUESTION WAS ANSWERED IN D. THE ANSWER TO THE SECOND IS THAT IRAN IS EVIDENTLY NOT CONSIDERING NEW APPROACHES. THE GOI IS GRADUALLY UPGRADING THE EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING IN BOTH THE GENDARMERIE AND NATIONAL POLICE BUT NOTHING TRULY INNOVATIVE APPEARS TO BE IN THE OFFING. THE COMMANDING
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GENERAL OF THE GENDARMERIE HAS PROPOSED ACQUIRING SNIFFER DOGS AND HANDLERS FOR SCREENING TRAFFIC AT BORDER CROSSING POINTS, BUT A SIMILAR PROJECT SEVERAL YEARS AGO WAS A TOTAL FAILURE. THE IRANIAN AUTHORITIES ARE NOT ORGANIZED FOR PROPER CARE OF SUCH DOGS AND THE NATIONAL ANTI-PATHY TO DOGS EVIDENTLY PRECLUDES TRAINING OF IRANIAN HANDLERS.

(6) IN OCTOBER 1973 A COMMISSION FORMED OF GENDARMERIE, NATIONAL POLICE, AND CUSTOMS OFFICIALS, JOINED BY GENMISH AND DEA ADVISERS, WAS FORMED TO ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM. IN MARCH 1975 IT WAS DECIDED, WITHOUT CONSULTING GENMISH OR DEA, TO DISCONTINUE THESE MEETINGS. THE ONLY TANGIBLE OUTCOME HAS BEEN TO REQUIRE THE USE OF IMPROVED SEALS FOR TIR TRUCKS. THE IRANIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE IS TOO UNDERSTAFFED TO CHECK ENOUGH

OF THE TRUCKS TO DISCOURAGE EFFECTIVELY ILLICIT TRAFFIC UNDER TIR DOCUMENTATION.

(7) THIS IS UNDOUBTEDLY A PROBLEM, BUT ESTIMATING ITS MAGNITUDE WOULD AMOUNT TO SHEER SPECULATION. THE FACT THAT MOST OF THE EFFORT AND ALL OF THE SEIZURES INVOLVE COURIERS AND PUSHERS RATHER THAN ORGANIZERS AND FINANCIERS TENDS TO SUBSTANTIATE THE EXISTENCE OF CORRUPTION AMONG OFFICIALS. IT IS ALSO, ON COURSE, A REFLECTION OF THE DESIRE TO AMASS IMPRESSIVE-LOOKING STATISTICS WITHOUT RUNNING POLITICAL RISKS.

(8) IT IS DOUBTED THAT THE GOI WILL ALLOT MORE MONEY FOR REGIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL MEASURES IN VIEW OF LESS-THAN-ANTICIPATED INCOME THIS YEAR FROM IRANIAN OIL.

(9) UNTIL THE PRESENT, THERE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN NO ATTEMPT TO COORDINATE THIS PROGRAM OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND MINISTRY OF COOPERATIVES AND RURAL AFFAIRS WITH THE TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION PROGRAM OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE. HOWEVER, MINISTRY OF HEALTH OFFICIALS SAY THEY HAVE MOVES TO TIGHTEN KP THE REQUIREMENTS WHICH MUST BE MET BEFORE A PERSON UNDER 60 CAN RECEIVE AN OPIUM RATION.

(10) IN THE FIRST PLACE, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT HEROIN IS BEING PRODUCED IN SIGNIFICANT AMOUNTS IN SOUTHEASTERN IRAN, BECUASE IT WOULD BE SO MUCH LESS RISKY TO DO THIS IN ADJACENT AREAS OF AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN. SECONDLY, RATHER THAN SMUG-
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GLING IT THROUGH IRAN TO THE GULF IT COULD BE MOVED MUCH MORE EASILY THROUGH KARACHI. ALSO, THE MARKET IN IRAN ITSELF IS TOO ATTRACTIVE TO TEMPT TRAFFICKERS TO RUN THE RISK OF ORGANIZING HEROIN DELIEVERIES TO THE WEST.

(11) THE POSSIBILITY EXISTS BUT IS NOT YET CONVINCING. THE SHIPMENT WAS TRACED FROM ZAHEDAN TO TEHRAN, WHERE IT WAS SEIZED. IT NOW APPEARS IT ORIGINATED OVER THE BORDER IN AFGHANISTAN, BUT ITS DESTINATION IS NOT KNOWN. THE FACT THAT THERE WAS NO DETECTIBLE INCREASE IN THE STREET PRICE OF HEROIN IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE SEIZURE COULD MEAN THAT THERAN WAS NOT THE INTENDED MARKET, BUT IT COULD ALSO BE SIMPLY EVIDENCE THAT THIS ROUTE IS NOT TEHRAN'S SOLE AVENUE FOR HEROIN SUPPLY.

(12) THE EMBASSY DOES NOT HAVE GOOD ANSWERS FOR THESE SPECULATIVE QUESTIONS. INFORMATION FROM THE NATIONAL POLICE WITH REGARD TO AN INCREASE IN PRICES IS UNDOUBTEDLY CONFINED TO THE TEHRAN AREA AND MAY NOT BE TRUE FOR IRAN AS A WHOLE. THE EFFECT OF THE RESUMPTIONOF POPPY CULTIVATION IN TURKEY WILL OBVIOUSLY DEPEND UPON HOW MUCH, IF ANY, OF IT IS DIVERTED EASTWARD.

(13) PROF. LALEZARI OF TEHRAN UNIVERSITY REPORTS THAT

A TOTAL OF 40 HECTARES ARE NOW UNDER CULTIVATION WITH THE
ARYA II STRAIN, WHICH CONTAINS 3.5 PER CENT THEBAIN. HE
EXPECTS A CROP OF DRIED AND SEEDLESS CAPSULES OF BETWEEN 10
TO 15 METRIC TONS. SEVERAL AMERICAN, BRITISH, FRENCH, AND
ISRAELI DRUG FIRMS ARE INTERESTED IN BUYING PORTIONS OF THE
CROP. AND THE PROSPECTS APPEAR SO FAVORABLE THAT HE MAY
INCREASE PRODUCTION NEXT YEAR TO 100 TONS.

HELMS

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